



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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June 22, 2007

April E. Brooks
International Cooperation Specialist
National Park Service
Office of International Affairs
1201 Eye St NW (0050)
5th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Virginia State Capitol World Heritage Tentative List.

Dear Ms. Brooks:

I am responding to Stephen Morris' (Chief, Office of International Affairs) May 23, 2007 letter. We appreciate the careful and thoughtful review of our application for placement of the Virginia State Capitol on the United States World Heritage Tentative List. I am responding to comments that Mr. Morris conveyed in his letter.

We accept the recommendation of the reviewers that the Virginia State Capitol should be combined into a joint application effort with Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. I have spoken with Travis McDonald, Director of Architectural Restoration, at Poplar Forest this past week. We have agreed to follow your recommendation and we will begin working together. I anticipate that the Office of International Affairs will let us know how we should proceed and if we are approved to go forward.

We understand that our efforts to list the additional Jefferson sites may be placed at a lower priority by the Committee charged with bringing forward one cultural listing application per year. We defer to their expertise on these matters of priority. If there is an opportunity to go forward with our applications for 2009 listing, we would appreciate that opportunity. In 2009: Poplar Forest celebrates their 200th anniversary of Jefferson's residency; it will be the 200th anniversary of Monticello's current form; the University of Virginia celebrates its 190th anniversary, and the State Capitol will have been in use for 220 years. We believe that bringing attention to all of the Jefferson sites is very important and timely.

In his letter, Mr. Morris asked that we address the historic integrity and authenticity of the State Capitol relative to Poplar Forest and the two other Jefferson properties already included in the World Heritage List. The following information is a brief comparative statement that will hopefully address some of the reviewer's questions. During the restoration work conducted at the State Capitol, over the past three years, we gathered new data on the construction materials that now allow us to have a new understanding

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of the evolution of the building. We are willing to provide a more detailed summary on the integrity and authenticity of the Capitol's fabric, if that would be of use. We have the Pre-Design Assessment Report compiled by the Hillier Architecture, the firm that conducted the restoration, from start to finish. I have asked Principal Architect Dr. George Skarmas to provide a summary of what was discovered during the recent restoration work. I will provide this summary in the coming week.

All four surviving Jefferson buildings, Monticello, Poplar Forest, Virginia State Capitol and University of Virginia have evolved physically over time, but all four have significant amounts of Jefferson-period architectural fabric, and all four still convey Jefferson's design intentions, especially in form and largely in detail.

It is worth noting some of the similarities and differences between the four surviving works of Thomas Jefferson. Both Virginia State Capitol and the University of Virginia were designed with intentions for public use. Both design expressions were meant to communicate and impart important values to citizens of Virginia. At the State Capitol, the use of the temple form was an intentional reference to Classical democracy. The University of Virginia is an architecture complex with Classical orders and forms intended as a direct educational model. The Rotunda was inspired by the Parthenon. In contrast, Monticello and Poplar Forest, private residences, were much more personal statements and here Jefferson experimented even more with design (more complex forms) and technology than in his public work. He also took a much more personal approach at shaping the landscape and actively participated in the agricultural operations.

Monticello and Poplar Forest both served as private residences well into the 20th century—they are both interpreted as residences in their present function. Their authenticity is very high. Both houses are set within historic landscapes that Jefferson would recognize. Restoration of both buildings is ongoing and based in the large body of Jefferson's written work and confirmed by careful material analysis and archaeology.

The State Capitol and the University Of Virginia still operate in their original functions. The University of Virginia is the youngest of the four sites, nearly 190 years old, and Monticello is the oldest at 237 years. Monticello survived through two significant national wars—the American Revolution and the American Civil War. The other three sites survived the American Civil War. The Evacuation Fire of 1865 burned the district adjacent to the Virginia State Capitol, but ultimately the building was spared from any significant damage.

Virginia State government has operated in the State Capitol building from the late 1780s to present. For four years it also served as Capitol of the Confederate States of America. It survived the stress of overcrowding and eventual internal collapse of part of its interior in the 1870s. It survived calls for a modern replacement in 1906, as the nation's state capitols were all undergoing changes that were responding to the needs of an expanding governments. Several proposals planned for severe alterations but the most sympathetic design approach was favored in respect for the Jefferson temple. The Virginia State Capitol's 1906 wings were subordinated to the temple block and the additional space allowed the older plan of the Jefferson-design to remain largely intact. An intention meant to preserve the Jefferson exterior and interior plan. The additions to the Capitol in 1906 allowed it to continue functioning as a capitol building and the recent restoration and addition continues the tradition of making sure the that

Jefferson's temple is the Capitol, and houses Virginia's legislative bodies with offices for the Governor of Virginia and other officials.

The University of Virginia's original complex, the area placed on the World Heritage List, serves as a working University. Some similar Virginian cultural institutions were threatened and severely damaged during the Civil War, for instance, the Virginia Military Institute was burned. The University of Virginia survived the threat of the 1860s, but the Rotunda was gutted in an accidental fire in 1895. It was rebuilt in the same form respecting the Jefferson intentions. Today the plan, the landscape, and the function of the historic Jefferson campus are intact and afford an authentic experience of Jefferson's largest architectural design. The function of most spaces, student and faculty living quarters and classrooms, continues to be part of this living fabric.

Understood together as the four surviving works of Thomas Jefferson, the Capitol, the University, and both residences, Monticello and Poplar Forest exhibit important sides of Thomas Jefferson's design intentions. His two public works are very different and clearly respond to different programs. His two residential designs show two approaches to his more personal design. The Virginia State Capitol and Poplar Forest will add to the understanding of Jefferson's architectural mastery. Because of the significant amount of surviving Jefferson-period fabric at all sites; the preservation of form, plan and landscape at all sites, the association between these four buildings and with their designer is very clear. Placing the Virginia State Capitol and Poplar Forest on the World Heritage List allows for a very complete understanding and worthy international recognition of the full breadth of Thomas Jefferson's architecture.

Please feel free to contact me at 804-367-2323 extension 115 or email: Marc.Wagner@dhr.virginia.gov , if you need further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Marc C. Wagner', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Marc C. Wagner
Director, Resource Information Division